Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission | Conseil de la radiodiffusion et des télécommunications canadiennes | Canada

News Release

October 29, 1995

DIGITAL RADIO SOON TO BE AVAILABLE IN CANADA

OTTAWA-HULL - The CRTC today announced its policy which will govern the introduction of digital radio in Canada (Public Notice CRTC 95-184). Digital radio broadcasting is capable of producing high quality sound and of providing new kinds of services to the public.

"During the transitional period, which starts today, and until a long-term policy is developed, we will issue licences valid for three years," CRTC Chairman Keith Spicer said. "During the next stage, we will replace the transitional digital radio licences with regular-term licences. This replacement will be virtually automatic and will likely involve a simple and streamlined process." The two-stage approach adopted by the Commission is the result of a call for comments initiated last June and announced in Public Notice 1995-95.

All existing AM and FM radio licensees wishing to provide programming using digital radio facilities will automatically qualify for transitional licences. Regulations such as those related to Canadian content will apply to these short-term licences, as will the specific terms and conditions outlined in the public notice. The Commission expects to have completed a public policy process and established a long-term licensing regime for digital radio within the next three years.

On the question of transmission facilities, the Commission states in its public notice that while it will wish to consider the issue of transmitter ownership in the context of a public policy process at a later date, it does not expect to prohibit the ownership of digital transmission facilities by any Canadian individual or entity in the long term, as long as issues of fair access are addressed.

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Copies of today's notice are available through our Internet home page (http://www.crtc.gc.ca) or by contacting the public examination room of any CRTC office:

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